

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 01350 231007Z

21

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 PM-04 COME-00 DODE-00 NSF-01

EUR-12 (ISO) W

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R 230925Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8387

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:TGEN

SUBJECT: US OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP CALLS IN MADAGASCAR

1. ACCORDING TO FRENCH CONSUL AT DIEGO SUAREZ, US OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP "DEEPSEA EXPLORER" SPENT ABOUT 24 HOURS IN MADAGASCAR'S NORTHERNMOST AND LARGEST PORT, DIEGO SUAREZ, JULY 25-26. COINCIDENTALLY, SOVIET OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP "PROFESSOR MESYATSEV" HAD ENTERED SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES (SECREN) AT DIEGO SUAREZ ON JULY 2 FOR REPAIR OF EXTENSIVE DAMAGE DONE TO SHIP'S ELECTRICAL AND ENGINE SYSTEMS DURING FIRE AT SEA.

2. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED CABLE FROM DIEGO SUAREZ AT ABOUT TIME OF DEEPSEA EXPLORER'S VISIT THAT SEVERAL CREWMEN MIGHT NEED EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE IN DEPARTING COUNTRY FROM TANANARIVE (NONE ACTUALLY REQUESTED ASSISTANCE), WE WERE UNAWARE THAT DEEPSEA EXPLORER WAS USG OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP. FRENCH CONSUL, WHO TOLD US ABOUT SHIP VISIT ONLY AT END OF LAST WEEK, SAID THAT SHIP'S CREW HAD CREATED QUITE A STIR IN DIEGO SUAREZ DURING ITS SHORE LEAVE, WHEREAS COMPORTMENT OF SOVIET SAILORS HAS BEEN EXCELLENT.

3. SOVIET SHIP WILL REMAIN AT DIEGO SUAREZ FOR UP TO SIX MONTHS FOR REPAIR. A LARGE NUMBER OF SOVIET TECHNICIANS, INCLUDING DIVERS, HAVE ARRIVED PERIODICALLY IN MADAGASCAR TO MAKE NECESSARY REPAIRS, ALTHOUGH SECREN HAS BENEFITTED PARTIALLY BY DOING REPAIR WORK

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PAGE 02 TANANA 01350 231007Z

TO OUTSIDE HULL AND PROVIDING LABOR FOR REWIRING.

DAO PROVIDING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SOVIET SHIP THROUGH
DOD CHANNELS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: ALTHOUGH GDRM HAS NOT RAISED US SHIP VISIT
WITH US, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON NATURE
OF VISIT AND NATURE OF DEEPSEA EXPLORER'S ACTIVITIES IN THIS AREA.
WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE INFORMATION RE NORMAL PROCEDURES
FOR SHIP OF THIS TYPE IN MAKING PORT CALLS, E.G.,
REQUESTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ADVANCE AUTHORIZATION, INASMUCH
AS WE PRESUME SHIP BELONGS TO USG.
SHEINBAUM

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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